

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-07 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01 EB-11

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----- 110887

R 151715Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1115

INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

USMISSION BERLIN

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E.O.H11652; N/A

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: JUSOS AND THE SPD

REF: A) BONN'S A-86; B) BONN 3606

SUMMARY: THE JUSOS REFUSE TO ACCEPT ANY SHARE OF THE
BLAME FOR THE SPD'S CURRENT POOR IMAGE. BUT THERE ARE
SOME SIGNS THAT THEY RECOGNIZE THAT THE PARTY IS IN
SERIOUS TROUBLE AND THAT THEY WILL HAVE TO TRIM THEIR
SAILS ACCORDINGLY. END SUMMARY.

1. THE JUSO'S OFFICIAL EXPLANATION FOR THE SPD'S POOR
SHOWING IN HAMBURG IS THAT THE VOTERS UNJUSTLY BLAMED
THE SPD FOR "HIGH PRICES RESULTING FROM THE OIL CRISIS,
WHICH WAS CAUSED BY THE OIL COMPANIES". THE JUSOS
ARGUE THAT THE SPD MUST DEVELOP A CLEARER ECONOMIC
PLATFORM, WHICH SHOULD INCLUDE NATIONALIZATION OF KEY
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INDUSTRIES. THEY ALSO RECOMMEND THAT THE SPD MAKE

CLEAR TO THE VOTERS THAT THE FDP IS TO BLAME FOR MANY OF THE GOVERNMENT'S SHORTCOMINGS.

2. THIS PUBLIC POSTURE CORRESPONDS FAIRLY CLOSELY TO WHAT THE JUSO LEADERSHIP ACTUALLY BELIEVES. BUT THEY ALSO KNOW THAT THE PARTY IS IN BAD SHAPE AND THAT IMPORTANT LAENDER ELECTIONS ARE APPROACHING. AND THIS WILL EXERT A CERTAIN PRESSURE ON THEM TO EXHIBIT GREATER PARTY SOLIDARITY THAN WOULD OTHERWISE BE THE CASE.

3. THE JUSO EXECUTIVE BOARD APPEARED BEFORE THE SPD EXECUTIVE BOARD ON MARCH 8 TO PRESENT AN ACCOUNTING OF THE RESULTS OF THE JUSO CONVENTION IN JANUARY. (REF A). AN SPD SOURCE TOLD US THAT THE ATMOSPHERE WAS "VERY RELAXED", THAT THERE WERE NO PROBLEMS, AND THAT THE 3-HOUR DISCUSSION SERVED TO POUR OIL ON THE TROUBLED WATERS STIRRED UP IN MUNICH. THIS IS NO DOUBT AN EXAGGERATION. WE HAVE HEARD THAT HELMUT SCHMIDT AND OTHERS CONTINUE TO FAVOR A TOUGHER LINE AGAINST THE PARTY'S YOUNG LEFT, AND DID NOT HESITATE TO SAY SO. BUT IN ANY CASE, BRANDT APPARENTLY -CONTINUES TO STAND BY HIS 1970 DECISION TO ABSORB RATHER THAN TO EXPEL THE PARTY'S FAR LEFT ELEMENTS, AND THIS HAS GIVEN THE JUSOS CONSIDERABLE LEEWAY.

4. YET THE JUSOS APPEAR TO FEEL THEMSELVES PLACED SOMEWHAT ON THE DEFENSIVE. THEY ARE WELL AWARE THAT THE CDU SEIZES EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY THEM OFF AGAINST THE TRADE UNIONS AND THE REST OF THE PARTY. THEY KNOW ALSO THAT THEY HAVE REPELLED MANY OF THE SPD'S TRADITIONAL SUPPORTERS, ESPECIALLY AMONG THE WORKERS.

5. IT WOULD BE FAR FETCHED TO SUGGEST THAT THE JUSOS WILL, IN THE LIGHT OF UNPLEASANT POLITICAL REALITIES, BECOME MEEK AND PASSIVE FOLLOWERS OF THE SPD LINE. BUT THEY CAN BE EXPECTED TO MAKE A MORE SERIOUS EFFORT TO FIND WAYS TO REMAIN TRUE TO THEIR BASIC BELIEFS WITHOUT AT THE SAME TIME HURTING THE PARTY. AN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INDICATION THAT THEY MAY BE WILLING TO SWALLOW A FEW BITTER PILLS FOR THE SAKE OF THE PARTY CAME ON MARCH 13, WHEN THE NRW JUSOS DECIDED TO SUPPORT HEINZ KUEHN IN THE 1975 LAND ELECTIONS "WITH ALL MEANS AT THEIR DISPOSAL." IN AN ANNOUNCEMENT PAPERING OVER THEIR RECENT DIFFERENCES WITH KUEHN, THE JUSOS EXPLAINED THAT "THEY NOW INTEND TO MAKE EVEN MORE CLEAR THEIR SOLIDARITY WITH THE REST OF THE SPD AND TO ACT

ONLY IN WAYS BENEFICIAL TO THE PARTY".

HILLENBRAND

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